



**Doctoral School of Political Science**

**P.hD. Thesis**

**Jozsef Urszan**

**The Role of Police Component of the EU Civilian Crisis Management  
Missions in the Western Balkans**

**Abstract**

**Supervisor:**

**Ivan Halasz Ph.D  
professor**

Budapest, 2016

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## **1. The subject and its research antecedents<sup>1</sup>**

The very first international peace support operations have launched at the end of 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century. A few of such interventions (as they typically mentioned „fire-fighting” missions) were organized by the Great Powers in the Balkan Peninsula and the Eastern Mediterranean. The most important early peace operations with law enforcement components were deployed to the Ottoman province Crete, Macedonia and Albania (Glenny [2012]) relevant to my thesis. These missions designed for maintaining peace and preventing the escalation of armed conflicts. The Hungarian soldiers and gendarme officers took also part in these international crisis response missions.

The research subject of the dissertation in broader means is the civilian crisis management (CCM), which concept emerged from the United Nations (UN) peacekeeping practice in the early sixties and became a method and comprehensive approach for stabilizing war-torn territories under the umbrella of the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) of the European Union (EU) (Kaspersen - Sending [2005]). Institutional framework and operational capability including police components of CSDP field missions of the EU played a decisive role in restoring human security and rule of law in the Western Balkans during and after the Yugoslav Wars in the nineties (Friesendorf [2010]).

The civilian way of crisis management theoretically and functionally has been separated from the military approach to crisis management, although these two basic alternatives linked to each other in several ways. The EU launched 21 civilian crisis management field missions in three continents (Europe, Africa and Asia) between 2003 and 2015. Five of the all were defined as police mission and four other operated remarkable police components. Furthermore, police officers of the EU MS were employed in various positions in each CSDP mission. The EU police components in Bosnia and Herzegovina and later in Kosovo supported the regional security policy, the international state-building efforts and the European perspectives of the Western-Balkan countries (Ágh [2006]). The multinational police components under the umbrella of the interim international administration was recognised as vital actors in restoration of security in war-torn territories and reorganization of civilian security sectors of host nations under interim administration (Caplan 2012: 21, Chandler 2009: 9-10, Chesterman 2007: 3-27). Research activity and willingness to publish

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scientific results regarding to the police contribution to civilian crisis management is much less intensive compared it to the military one, although the role of police functions in peace support operations is more and more significant (Holgund - Oberg 2011: 36). The great majority of the previous research projects in the subject mainly were focused on implementation of CSDP itself, while the main characteristic and essence of police components remained undigested in scientific publications (Tardy [2011], Schröder [2007]). This attitude could be established as a tendency in the Hungarian law enforcement scientific community, too. The Hungarian scientific research projects of peace studies especially in the field of peace keeping operations were targeted at military aspects of crisis management mainly (Boda [2006]), Padányi [2010]).

One of the most relevant Hungarian research projects was a military-sociology survey conducted in military peacekeeping between June 2008 and July 2010. The researchers of this empirical study focused on military personnel and requested also 50 Hungarian police officers to participate in the project (Kiss [2011]). The second important native qualitative research was conducted to explore timely features of the Hungarian police contribution to peace support operations, which survey involved also 50 Hungarian police officers in 2009. The International Training Centre of Budapest and the Miklós Zrínyi National Defence University of Budapest used a structured questionnaire to gather information from police officers about their opinion on application, selection, training and service in CSDP missions. The results described such general problems like professional deficiencies and professional conflicts of interests in the missions, legal insufficiency in the Hungarian secondment exercise and exclusion of foreign mission service period from home career path and institutional lack of interest to implement mission experiences, for example (Boda-Farkas [2010]). This research pointed out some current problems of the EU way of civilian crisis management and the Hungarian police contribution to it without in-depth explanation of the reasons. In my opinion, the above mentioned problems can be traced back to the organizational and administrative malfunctions of the CSDP field missions as well as deficiencies of the Hungarian police contribution. And therefore, I selected these aspects to study in order to gain insights into the real nature of these difficulties and contribute to the existing Hungarian law enforcement scientific knowledge by new results.

According to the most common perception of my research subject, the EU civilian crisis management can be assessed as a policy and method, which is based on non-military capabilities (Wyn [2008]). Multinational police components of the CSDP field missions are essential part of the method, however, a commonly agreed definition on them has not been

formulated yet (Nowak [2006]). In order to solve the problem, among the scholars of the subject became popular and acceptable to create own working definitions to use for special research purpose (Tóthi [2011]). Following these approach, I defined the police component in my research as a special institutional structure of CSDP civilian field missions in which mainly seconded police officers of the EU member states are contributing to state-building efforts by their advisory and/or executive mandate.

Police components of peace operations also became an important and integral part of reorganization of state administration of the war-torn countries as an integral part of international state-building efforts all over the world (Halász [2005], Rada [2008]). Contrary to this, the police officers played only peripheral role in humanitarian intervention (Sulyok [2004]), or in civil-military co-operation (Huntington [1985]). Regarding to these special feature of my research subject, I investigated the police components of CSDP field missions launched in the Western Balkans with respect to state-building and European integration.

## **2. Applied methodology**

The dissertation studied law enforcement functions and units of the early peace support operations of the Great Powers and characteristics of police components of the CSDP civilian field missions in the Western Balkans from historical and comparative aspects. The principal method of the research was the theory-guided process tracing (TGPT), which procedure is more and more popular in comparative political studies. TPGT is an analytical tool proved as useful to test hypotheses by empirical evidence in social science research (Collier [2011]). TPGT could be optimal solution for scientific enquiry, when the investigated subject has historical antecedents can be compared them to their contemporary occurrence proving solid evidence on traditional motives and causality. From this point of view, subjects of TPGT can be individual cases, events or series of events with the same nature in the past. There are three often used sub-methods of the applied TPGT: in-depth interviews, observation and content analysis (Vennesson [2008]). I used both of them in my research. Content analysis of the scientific literature with respect to the early peace support operations in the Balkans. Documents of police components of CSDP civilian field missions were also applied in the first stage of the research. Observation and audio recorded in-depth interviews were conducted in the empirical phase of my research. In-depth interview is a generally used

method in data acquisition of social science research to operate with case studies (Tansey [2007]).

The non representative sample for in-depth interviews consisted of law enforcement experts (mainly police officers) diplomats and civil servants were employed in CSDP civilian missions of the EU in the Western Balkans. In the collection stage of my three-year long research project I recorded interviews with 59 experts on voluntary bases including 51 police officers and 8 civilian employees of the missions by average one and half hour-long discussions in Hungary, Serbia, FYROM, Albania and Kosovo. Each in-depth interview was guided through a structured set of questions as written guideline, which was compiled by me in a workshop at the beginning of my research project.

In the collation phase, I made precise abstract from the content of each audio recorded interview. Summarizing the most common or typical answers of the interviewed experts on the certain questions allowed me to generalize standpoints and testing hypotheses. Informal atmosphere of interview sessions facilitated the interviewed to express their subjective opinion on organization and management features of the missions' police components. It was added value to mapping current opportunities and barriers of EU civilian crisis management capability available inside the field missions. My personal experiences gathered in the Western-Balkans also assisted me to evaluate and analyze empirical knowledge of the research in order to draw correct conclusions for my thesis.

### **3. The results of the thesis**

The international community has been played crucial role in restoring law and order of war-torn territories in the Balkans, among others, by their peacekeeping and crisis management missions since the late 19th century. Diplomatic efforts of the Great Powers gradually were complemented by multinational military and gendarmerie field missions in order to fulfill law enforcement tasks on the ground. And therefore, my thesis starts with a comparative analysis of the three most important early crisis management missions in the region namely the executive military operation in the Ottoman Crete (1897-1898) and the advisory mission for the civilian security sector reform in Macedonia (1903-1908) and the gendarmerie mission in Albania (1913-1914). All of these field missions had quite a few common institutional and police professional features, which appeared also in the modern crisis management missions with the same ambitions. Temporary deployment of police

officers on secondment, establishment of national police contingents within the mission structure or referring to concrete executive and advisory functions of policing in written form of political mandate can be mentioned as such elements highlighted by my thesis.

The establishment of military and gendarmerie troops of the international operation in Ottoman Crete was conducted by the British Empire, the Russian Empire, France, Italy and the Austro-Hungarian Empire in 1897. The basic goal of the successful mission was to disrupt the conflicted Greek-Turkish troops and restoring public security. The Hungarian military officers and gendarmes were deployed first in the capital of the island, where they were involved in humanitarian actions and armed peacekeeping tasks. The Macedonian security sector reform (often referred as the Mürzsteg reform programme) to modernize the Ottoman Gendarmerie was also launched by the Austro-Hungarian Empire and the Russian Empire in 1903. This partly successful conflict prevention mission's Hungarian gendarmeries observed and advised the local law enforcement troops to support security developments in Manastir Vilayet. The Austro-Hungarian Empire and Italy initiated the next international gendarmerie mission after proclamation of the independent Albania to deal with the deep security crisis inside the new-born country in 1913. It was realized by a military expert group from the Netherlands, which assisted the creation of an efficient national Albanian gendarmerie but they could not be able to finish their mission because of eruption of the World War I. These early peace support and crisis management missions of the Great Powers were followed by the modern UN peacekeeping missions after 1945.

The necessity to establish a permanent multinational police force within UN peacekeeping capability emerged around late 1940s but the first such police component was deployed only in 1964. The strength of UN police component (UNPOL) was developed intensively in the nineties. Today more than 13,500 armed and unarmed police officers serve the peace and security in 19 UN field missions and country teams all over the world (2015). The UNPOL employees in field missions have executive and/or advisory authority to restore law and order and support rule of law or civilian security sector reforms in post-conflict territories.

The EU Member States decided to establish own military and civilian capability for crisis management purposes under the umbrella of the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) in 2000, while they still participated in UN peacekeeping missions. The European countries collectively offered up to 5,000 police officers on secondment to the field missions in order to feed operational needs of the EU civilian crisis management model under CSDP. Hungary offered 107 law enforcement experts to this police capability. The very first EU



civilian crisis management field operation was launched as police mission in the Western Balkans in 2003. The EU has launched 21 civilian crisis management missions of the total of 32 CSDP missions all over the world since 2003.

The great majority of my dissertation is about four such filed missions, which were operated in the Western Balkans and had police components. The first evaluated mission was the European Union Force ALTHEA (EUFOR ALTHEA) military operation in Bosnia and Herzegovina is going on since 2004. EUFOR ALTHEA had an integrated police component within its organizational structure to fight against cross-border organized crime and high-profile corruption by executive authority (Knauer [2011]). A few Hungarian police officers served in the multinational police component of this military deployment with executive mandate (Smodics [2012]). The second was the European Union Police Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (EUPM BiH), which mission was created as the first police mission of the EU and operated with advisory mandate between 2003 and 2012. EUPM BiH was deployed in accordance with the Dayton Agreement (1995) to support the local police reform process, strengthening of police accountability and the fight against organised crime (Ashdown [2010]). The third civilian mission with relevance to my research was the European Union Police Mission in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (EUPOL PROXIMA, and its successor EUPAT FYROM) operated as a police mission from 2003 to 2004. EUPOL PROXIMA mission also formed a police component that consisted of 150 experts to assist local authorities in fighting against organized crime and corruption by its advisory mandate through mentoring and monitoring functions (Márkus [2005]). The fourth mission in my comparison was the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo (EULEX) has been launched in 2008. EULEX as the largest civilian crisis management operation of the EU so far, reached a staff number of 3,100 and in its police component served the ever biggest Hungarian law enforcement contingent with 53 personnel in 2009 (Hajdu [2014]). The police component of EULEX has limited executive and strengthening function to carry out concrete police operations and assist the local law enforcement organizations to develop their capacity and efficiency.

Accomplishing police functions to stabilize fragile security situation in post-conflict territories is crucial in itself, but the EU also dedicated to facilitate other, much broader policy objectives in the Western Balkans. One of such comprehensive goals tried to be strengthened by police functions of the missions is the European perspective for EU enlargement. It was offered to the Western Balkan countries by the EU Summit in Thessaloniki in 2003. Realization of this enlargement policy decision is not a political priority for the EU between

2013 and 2019 but its financial support for infrastructural, political and economical development for the region remained constant (Junker [2014]). Meanwhile, the sound advancement reached by the Western Balkan countries in political and economic transition since the first EU civilian mission launched also proves evidence on the relevance of multinational police components in preconditioning of international state-building efforts. However, some problems and dysfunctions can also be diagnosed in terms of organisation and management practice of the CSDP field missions influencing negatively the work efficiency on the ground.

According to my research, one problem is a kind of short-term minded „*project style approach*” to financial and staff management of the field missions. This phenomenon has developed into a sort of informal directive in the field of organization of the civilian crisis management missions including the whole police component. It is widely recognised that the police function in a civilian crisis management missions is a special segment of the time-consuming mandate implementation, where professional continuity should be maintained consistently. The field presence of the police staff depends on the relevant employment practice of the missions, which is driven by the ever-changing short-term needs and interests as well as available budget like in the case of a short-term project. The current selection and employment policy of the civilian missions does not take any difference between civilian and seconded police staff. Police officers can apply for vacant posts as individual civilian applicants even into the police component for absolutely uncertain service period. This practice requires national secondment of the police officers to the personally obtained positions but does not guarantee fix-term employment or existence of national contingents within the certain field mission. Consequently, such selection and employment process does not offer constant participation of all the EU countries in the missions by at least one expert per state. Another large problem is the endemic fluctuation of police officers in professional positions of the field missions. This tendency is boosted by the project style employment policy, which is build up on short-term secondment of the vast majority of selected experts instead of proffering contractual type employment in the professionally key mission positions like in the EU agencies. The ever changing staff of the mission can cause a dramatic waving in long-term professional performance and mandate implementation. The mission’s life cycle is also heavily influenced by the available annual budget, which situation may generate too frequent or even unnecessary reorganizations and results uncertainty among mission staff. Contrary to the current organization and management solutions of CSDP field missions, the role of national contingents should be restored in civilian crisis management system and the

professional areas should also be distributed among the contributing states in such missions have police component. Such solution means a definite return to the organizational and management pattern of the early peace support missions in the Western Balkans and coherent with the current organizational practice of the EU military operations. Such approach would be much more suitable for the goals of long-term crisis management initiatives and could guarantee all co-operating states' presence in the certain mission from the beginning. Distribution of professional areas among the national police contingents of the participating states within the mission can significantly increase the professional standards by encouraging the interested countries to deploy their best experts to own responsibility area(s) in the mission even for a long period of time. It may be resulted the contractual based employment in key positions further enhancing the professional stability of the whole mission under the mandate implementation period.

The second phenomena I identified in the police components of CSDP missions in the Western Balkans was a kind of "*implementation bargain*", which may be expandable to all civilian crisis management missions regardless of their political mandate. It is about a serious dilemma of what kind of compromise can be imagined or allowed on behalf of the mission professional staff and management in mandate implementation especially in unpredictable and hostile environment. The armed and executive mandated police officers of the missions often experienced that their necessary measures such as house searches or arrests were assessed as harsh manifestation of a repressive foreign regime by the locals. Meanwhile, such EU police components had "soft" advisory mandate was evaluated many times as unnecessary and ineffective international effort especially by the local press.

The mission staff often face with inhospitable reactions and very critical approaches of their service by outsiders, which situation enforces them into mandate implementation related compromises in order to keep up the mission's presence in the host country for a longer period of time. In such case the executive police component sometimes does not take all the necessary or expected measures or suspend its operation for instruction, even if it has the right and professional reasons to do it, for example. Similarly, in police advisory function maintaining a conflict-free cooperation with the host countries' authorities can be acceptable performance from mandate implementation aspect, even if the mission never gets closer to its stated operational goals. In the background of this attitude frequently stands a complex but reasonable set of motivation. Implementation of the mission's ultimate goals is important but the physical security of the mission staff and ensuring durable presence of the mission on the ground is fundamental. Insisting on completion of the mandate at any price is not always

reasonable amid turbulent political and social environment of a post-conflict territory. It seemed to be a possible solution to find balance between political expectation of the crisis management vision and modalities of the host country by compromises in professional performance time to time if it is inescapable. This generally caused negative assessment on crisis management capability of the mission and was rather harmful to the professional self-respect of mission staff in the police components. Such phenomenon can result a significant loss in personal motivation of mission staff in a long run, which is contradict with the basic interests of the cooperating parties in crisis management. And therefore, it would be advantageous if the crisis management actors defined realistic and feasible professional aims for the police component by profound assessments of operational circumstances in the planning phase.

#### **4. Summary**

I tried to find appropriate answers to the following research question in my dissertation. First: what is the role of multinational police component in international state-building efforts especially in the case of EU civilian crisis management missions? Second: what kind of solutions were implemented from the early peacekeeping operations of the Great Powers into the EU civilian crisis management model in the Western Balkans and how these methods appeared in the organization of police component? Third: how the Hungarian police contribution responded to EU mission needs and requirements especially in the field of selection, training, service and perception of their professional role? Conceptualizing the above mentioned research questions, I formulated three working hypothesis.

(H1) It seems to be that the multinational police component of EU civilian crisis management field missions became essential and integrated part of state-building and enlargement policy of the EU28 in the Western Balkans.

(H2) There is a historical continuity in applied solutions of law enforcement components of peace support operations in the late 19th century and the EU crisis management missions in the Balkans. It relates to the political mandate, structure, organizational and operational features of the missions. However, organizational and management style of police component of the missions requires some reform in the EU model of contemporary civilian crisis management.

(H3) The practice of Hungarian police contribution to the CSDP field missions is suitable and fits with the related EU requirements. On the other hand the sustainability of the

current successful co-operation needs some modifications and development in the native legal and institutional environment. This special area of police work and the Hungarian police officers' service in foreign countries are not integrated into the indigenous police career model properly.

The first of the four scientific results of my dissertation is that I used a novel viewpoint, namely the historical perspective to study my research subject instead of processing it only in the context of CSDP. This approach was useful as a conceptual framework to mark exact boundaries of my research. TGPT method was also advantageous to identify and track the evolution and role of police component in peace support operations of different historical eras. My research provided stable empirical evidence that the gendarmerie and police components of peace support operations were necessary and irreplaceable elements of the international crisis management efforts for more than century in the Balkans. This component's contribution to the peace support initiatives and missions of the international community is a tendency and historical continuity. The civilian crisis management concept as a part of this evolution emerged from the UN peacekeeping practice. The EU further developed and introduced it into its CSDP civilian field missions to become a living model in today's peace operations. It is also a historical tradition that the multinational police troops always had to be tackled with almost the same kind of problems and challenges in the field of law enforcement in the Western Balkans. Mitigating the effects of endemic corruption, weak statehood, lack of security or ethnically motivated serious armed conflicts on civilian population meant recurrent tasks for police officers in the missions. My dissertation first and second chapter covers this issue.

The second result is that, I explored some less known feature of concrete role and management of police components in peace operations by comparing the political mandate of each mission with each other. The political goals with the missions always changed in the Balkans and it affected the role perception of the police components. The law enforcement troops as quick responders were responsible only for creating public security in Ottoman Crete, for instance. Later in Macedonia and Albania the international field missions received another type of mandate to support civilian sector reform initiatives in order to prevent cross-border conflicts and strength a new-born nation state. They started to serve a broader political interest of international actors than creating security in the region on behalf of the Great Powers. The most recent development of this process is dated back to the Yugoslav Wars (1991-1995, 1998/1999), when the relevance of CSDP missions' police component appeared in the quasi geopolitical aims directly by stabilizing the war-torn states to prepare them for

EU accession. The police component as a structure in the civilian missions has been changed significantly over a century. The relevance of police executive and advisory functions increased and the relevance of police service in civilian crisis management revalued. The EU has organized purely police missions yet and the number of professional civilian police staff is growing in the missions. According to the practical experience of the CSDP missions in Western Balkans, the missions' organizational and administrative manner are also in changing and try to adapt to the increased logistical and police expert needs of the missions. From my dissertation can be traced, how the EU civilian crisis management changed the operational circumstances of the police component to gain its current form and relevance in crisis management.

The third result of my dissertation is that I put the research subject into regional political and economic context to examine the relevance and effectiveness of CSDP field missions' police components in the EU integration of Western Balkan countries. This is not a typical way to approach the police components' relevance and effectiveness in post conflict resolution. In order to identify how the multinational police component of CSDP missions contributed to state-building efforts, I analyzed and evaluated the most recent country reports and survey results on political and economical transition of the relevant post-conflict counties and their neighborhood. Summarizing the statements of the European Commission (EC) timely reports on the Western Balkan countries' position in enlargement and results of a comprehensive democracy index (Bertelsmann BTI) succeeded to prove the necessity of police component in state-building and enlargement policy. The Western Balkan states reached very serious advancement in political, economical and social means since the first CSDP field mission was launched in 2003. The differences among these countries mainly in economical terms were also decreased. According to the unbiased and professional assessments of the official documents of the EC and the BTI, the police component under its political mandate contributed successfully to the development of rule of law, civilian security sector reform and the fight against corruption in the whole region. On the other hand, it is essential to note that the Western Balkan countries need to take further efforts mainly depending upon their own resources to attain the EU accession in the future. It seems to be a long way from police professional point of view.

The fourth result is a detailed overview on the current style and challenges of the Hungarian police contribution to the CSDP field missions, which is based on my empirical research. The CSDP missions look back to a little more than a decade-long history but they fulfill leading role in civilian crisis management mechanism in close cooperation with other

international organizations and stakeholders. On the other hand, the police component is not developed enough from some aspects of organization and management. This ascertainment also seems to be correct to the Hungarian police contribution in the light of the results of my research. I devoted one chapter in my dissertation to give a detailed summary of the most important results of my empirical research on police component disclosing the anonymized subjective opinions of the interviewees. This chapter reveals some special feature and problem of organization of police component in CSDP missions such as conflicting staffing policy, or legal deficiencies in the seconding exercise of the Hungarian police experts and lack of harmony between short mission service period and long-term police professional career.

In my opinion, the results of my research verified all of my working hypotheses. In case of my first hypothesis it can be stated that the EU created its way in civilian crisis management, in which the police component built up own institutional mechanism independently from the military one. The EU military and civilian capabilities cooperate with each other on the ground successfully but the current organizational solutions of the police component of CSDP missions should be further developed. The second hypothesis about historical continuity in professional evolution of the police component in the Balkans also proved true. Such a solid features of the current CSDP practice like employment of seconded police officers for law enforcement tasks can be assessed as historical tradition. Nevertheless, this exercise in its present form is not likely to be sustainable for long and therefore it should be reformed. The third hypothesis was also strengthened. The in-depth interviews and legal documents underpinned my previous assumption about conformity of the Hungarian crisis management contribution to the EU requirements. However, in order to keep up the current high quality of professionalism and commitment of the Hungarian police experts for this special form of service, it should be integrated into the professed career path in the future.

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